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MIMOSA AND OTHER POEMS.



CLARK B. COCHRANE.

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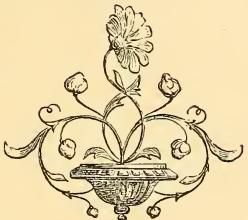


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1869

MIMOSA AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

CLARK B. COCHRANE.



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POEMS.

MIMOSA.

OUT of the depths of the mercy of God
The blessings and comforts of man arise,
And out of the depths of the human heart
The bitterest woes of the flesh are led
By Passion, the parent of all our woe.
The story I tell, it is one of woe—
How evil passions came out of the depths,
Falsehood and jealousy, hatred and fear,
And bore a soul from the home of its bliss,
Out unto misery, hopeless and long.

Many a tempest in a brain I've seen,
When the heart sickened and the senses failed ;
When every feature bore the mark of pain
And agony which had no utterance,
But burned within, like a consuming fire
Devouring at the with'ring roots of life !

But only one when I could hear its moan,
Sad as the wailing of October winds
That play among the sombre pines, the dirge
Of Summer's glory and of harvest days.

I had a friend who was my only friend ;
In fact, he was the nearest of my kin ;
We had been brothers from the natal morn,
And what touched him came nearest home to me.
I loved him as a brother and a friend,
And through long years I knew that he was true —
The only friend that never did prove false
When fell Disaster came across my way,
Or selfishness asserted its mean claim.
We played together in our childhood's hour,
And chased along the smiling meadows then
The same illusive shadows in our glee,
And thought our father's acres were the world,
And broad enough for happiness at that.
The noisy squirrels and the birds of song
Were our companions in that happy time,
And our domain was boundless as was theirs,
And we roamed through it, just as wild and free.
We learned our lessons from the same worn book,
And the same mother taught to us the prayer

Which had been said for eighteen hundred years
By youth and innocence unto their God.
And O, the sweetest of all prayers is that,
And most acceptable unto His ear
Who framed its supplication and appeal,
And gave it as a potent spell, to men
When He walked with them in the failing flesh,
And taught them that its silver music reached,
In mercy-pleading echoes, through all time.
And when maturer years had come to us,
And childhood's supple limbs grew strong and
lithe,
We had a love for Nature ; and we drank
Together at her never-failing fount.
We climbed the mountain at the day's decline,
And from beneath the gnarled and dying oak,
Where oft the Indian maiden plighted love
In the traditional days of yore,
We watched the sun sail down the western sky,
And gazed upon his robes of fleecy gold
That trail forever round the belted earth,
Until the night owl, from his hemlock-tree,
Disconsolate, began to hail his mate
In the far woods below ; and quickly mocked
By the returning echo of his voice

Gloomy and dismal, shouted louder still.
Thus we were friends together, and the same
In every feeling and in every thought.

He loved a rustic maiden of the woods
Who dwelt beside the mountain of his youth,
And bore, among a delving race, the name,
Fragrant in cherished memories, of him
Who sang of Hope so sweetly and so long,
Linked with the appellation loved, of her
To whom the pale nuns, through the fading years,
Chant *Ave Maries* at the vesper hour.
Ave Maria ! O, sweetest, dearest name
That ever trembled on a human tongue !
Ave Maria ! with the infant Jesus
Close folded to thy bosom and long kissed,
In Joseph's tent beneath Judæa's palms !
Ave Maria ! through ages dark and long,
Watching and praying for the human soul
Unfortunate, wretched, despairing, lost
In life's eternal wilderness ! — sublime !
Half that is beautiful is called for thee,
O, Mother of Jehovah's Sinless Son !

And she loved him with a devoted love,
And lingered oft upon his silver tongue

In the sweet presence of the evening star ;
And oft their lips met in that glorious kiss
Which speaks a volume that was never writ,
And never can be by a mortal pen !

O, love's long delicious kiss !
He kissed her lips of honey dew,
Until his stronger passion drew
Her mild, submissive spirit through
Those gates of pearl, those gates of bliss !
Out of her body into his,
Down from another world to this !

She twined her loving arms about his neck,
And spoke to him as blushing Eve once spoke
To Adam in the groves of Paradise,
In accents sweeter than the angels sung
When first the Star of Bethlehem arose ;
And still, it was the story never old,
The whispered tale of every age and clime,
Told with the same quick heart-throb and soft eye
Beside the windy pine, or 'neath the sun-kissed
palm.
And sometimes they were silent and made love ;
And I remember at a neighbor's house,

They looked across a brace of squirming brats,
And told a tale whereon a heartache hung
In after years, and will forever hang !
For love hath its distinctive dialect
Of glances subtle as a passing thought,
Its sweet vernacular of whispering sighs
And eloquent touch and pressures of the hand —
And eyes that look into each other, and
Flashing, utter volumes in one moment,
Are better than the oily tongue of craft.
Thus he was happy as the days sped on ;
And true to love and nature, longed to tell
To some long-trusted and confiding heart,
What little human language could express
Of the sweet something that o'erflowed his soul,
As rivers overflow their banks in spring.
And when we walked together, arm in arm,
One summer evening when the wind was cool,
He told me the brief story of his bliss :
He said to me, “ Dear brother, you are wise
In this world’s wisdom, and your sympathy,
As broad as human misery, will be
With me in all my sorrows and my joys,
And give me counsel what is best to do ;
So I will tell you something that concerns

My happiness in this world, and the world
That lies beyond our vision, into which
We sometimes long, and always dread to go.
Dear brother, I'm in love. My secret heart,
Vacant so long, is full of bliss to-day,
And blessed spirits, laughing in my soul,
Are saying ever, 'O, how fair she is,
How good, how true, how like a saint she is !'
Her face is like an angel's, and her eye
Blacker than darkness multiplied by night
Upon the Stygian shore ; but O, how soft,
How milder than the harvest moon it is,
When it doth look in mine, and feed my soul !
It is my North Star on the sea of life !
I'll steer my frail bark by it into port,
And anchor in the sweetness of its smile !
And every hair of her divinest head
Is made a bow-string for the saucy god
Whose barbed arrows, cruelly shot home,
Invisible as a star-beam in the sun,
Strike visible lovers, and their hearts do make
Perpetual sighing where her feet have trod !
It was a silver arrow that shot me,
A silver arrow, steeped in purest balm,
And with the god's congratulations sent."

“ And bliss — first tell me what is bliss,” said I,
Thinking to throw a quibble in his face.

“ O, I will tell you what you know full well,
Or ought to know, from long companionship
With its delightful ministers,” said he.

“ Bliss is that music in the soul we feel
When those who loved us in the failing flesh,
From the Elysium of the just, come back,
And touch the spirit’s dulcimer and harp
With their ethereal fingers, and awake
The strings that recognize no mortal touch,
Save that of our first, best, and only love!
More indescribable than life itself,
No human mind can analyze its sum,
Though it were Bacon added unto Locke,
Or, for a moment, hold its essence in
The vast alembic of philosophy.”

“ Your definition’s good,” I said, “ go on.”

“ Last night we sat beneath the lazy moon,
Under the spreading branches of the elms
That shade the cottage of our better days.
The blue sky was above us, and the stars

Came out in all their glory. At our feet
The winding river rippled on, and played
The same monotonous music, sad and low,
That soothed the forest maiden, when of old
Its shores were wild with Nature's rudest charms.
The maid, who sat beside me in the joy
Of innocence, was only half of earth ;
She seemed a phantom of another world,—
The fair embodiment of a dream, let down
From Beauty's gorgeous palace of the sky,
In some spell-moving chariot of the air
Whose wheels of gold flashed in the sunlight far !
O, life ! locked in the passionate embrace
Of loving arms, whose snowy whiteness made
The lily weep envious tears, distilled
From bland Aurora's fragrant breath when she
Surveys the morning landscape in her pride,
I thought myself a king upon a throne —
The King of Fairies on the throne of Love ;
I reveled in that sea of dreamy bliss
Which has no limit and no mortal bounds,
And envied not Adonis when he won
Celestial beauty to an earthly couch,
Or him who folded Psyche to his arms,
The disobedient Cupid disobeyed.

Sweet Hesperus was then the evening star,
The night's fine diamond set in sapphire vast,
And while we gazed upon its gentle face
It seemed to recognize the love of earth,
And answer back Heaven's deeper, purer love.
If some fair angel from Elysian bowers,
With Heaven's ambrosial nectar on her wings,
Had spoken to me then of bliss beyond
The vague and transitory things of time,
I would have kissed the lips that greeted mine,
And smiled upon the laughing eyes that looked
The soul's unutterable thought, and bid
The angel of eternal years depart,
And leave me with the angel of a day !

“ The man who would not barter half a year
Of drowsy months and uneventful days
For the wild transports of a rapturous hour,
In which the snail-like and incrusted soul
Creeps half way out its temporary shell,
Knows little of the value of his life,
And reckons iron better than fine gold,
Because he gets more of it for his pains !
Ascetic as the Puritan of old
Whose sickly watchfires burned on Plymouth shore

When chill December toned the northern blast,
His blood was never at a passion heat;
The slow pulsations of his stony heart
Ne'er threw the ruddy drops into his brain ;
But dry as dust, and regular as dry,
It beats, like a brass pendulum, the hours.
But blame him not, for each soul knows its sphere,
Its fate predestined in the long ago,
And follows, of its own free will, the way
It cannot choose but follow to the end.
He may be wise, if wisdom is for man ;
He may, if the enthusiast's dream be true,
Which he has greatly and sublimely dreamed,
Reap sheaves of bliss upon some other star
With no regrets for this. God grant he may."

Thus he was happy, as the days sped on,
Till crawling reptiles in the human form,
That peddle slander, and advice worse still,
And shape the sentiment of trusting hearts,
And lead confiding natures into wrong,
Breathed their vile poisons in her childish ears
Which were too sensitive on moral things,
So far as taught by precept long applied
By a fond mother's over-watchful care —

If it be possible to stand too close
Upon the fine points of the moral law.
Then she bethought her of his many faults,
The small delinquencies of youth let loose,
And measured them by what the harpies said,
Till in her untaught fancy they assumed
The definite proportions of great crimes.
Then she grew angry with herself, and thought
She had done wrong in passion's thoughtless hour ;
That he who once seemed fair and good to her
Might be a hideous monster, after all,
Whose glance was villainy, whose kiss was shame !
And when her fiery lover sought to cool
His brain bewildered, in the maple shade,
And Death's beloved Sister gently pressed
Her opiate finger to his pallid lips,
And he forgot he was a living soul,
For one short hour of pain assuaging sleep,
She held above him with a trembling hand
The lamp of Psyche, but she dropped no oil,
And Nature woke him, at her own sweet will,
To keenest sorrow, and to hope forlorn !

O, if there be a reptile doubly cursed,
A *thing* that wears the “human shape divine”

To serve the purpose of a baser fiend
Than ever trod Perdition, in its life
Offending Heaven and disowned of Hell,
It is the wretch who peddles social slime
And magnifies small faults to injury !
Sooner than take such by the hand, and say,
“ My friend, good-morrow, and God bless your
soul,”

I would affiliate with petty thieves,
Malicious murderers and assassins damned,
And own the fiend, who plies the midnight torch,
As very special brother to my soul !

O, she was changed, and all the world to him ;
His star of happiness set where it rose ;
Darkness and desolation filled his sky,
And the bright hope within his bosom shrunk
Back to the nothing which it was when he
Had laid before the idol of his heart,
Whom he thought true as anything that's true,
The fair epitome of truth itself,
The confident devotion of his soul,
And loved the seeming angel of his dreams
With all he was, or all he hoped to be
In this world or the world which is to come,

And met, for constancy, and love, and truth —
For he had banished every thought of guile
From out the chambers of his secret soul —
But blandly smiling treachery, black as hell !
Contemptible, insidious, and damned,
That leads and lures with passion's treacherous kiss,
Full of delirious rapture, but no soul !

He sought forgetfulness, but sought in vain.
He dreamed of her in his short hours of sleep ;
He thought that in a cot of smiling peace,
With blest contentment as their lifelong guest,
They dwelt together on their native hills,
And let the current of their lives flow on
To that mysterious and unknown abode
Which waits us all ; — two fountains, but one stream,
And then a spirit, rising from the shades
Of Lucifer's dominions, bleak and drear,
Spread over him its wings of spectral gloom,
And shouted in his ear till he awoke
This, and this only, — “ *Never, for ever !* ”
These words were sadder than the voice of Death
When he doth call a budding soul away
From all its new-born hopes ; and yet he dreamed,
And they could never banish that one dream

From out his drowsy respite from despair ;
And when he woke he wished it always night,
That he might sleep forever — sleep and dream :
For evanescent, unsubstantial things
Are better than the blank of nothingness !
He loved that dream ; and once he wrote upon
The fly-leaf of a book which she had loved,
And sanctified by her perusal oft,
The sum and substance of it. Here it is : —

O, come to me in dreams,
And let me kiss thy balmy lips in sleep ;
O, let me wander by love's crystal streams,
Though I must wake to weep !

O, let me fondly press
Thy gentle presence to my heart grown cold,
And smooth thy forehead with a long caress,
As in the days of old !

For when the morning sun
Shall bid the sleeping world in light rejoice,
My sands of happiness will all be run —
I shall not hear thy voice !

For adverse Fate hath led
The warm affections of thy heart from me ;
And I must think of thee, as of the dead
To all but memory.

But I will higher prize —

Though loved and lost — thy memory while I live,
Thy joyous kiss, the love-light of thine eyes,
Than all the world can give.

He wrote ; but words were nothing, words were
cheap ;

The winds of passion blew them all away ;
And when he saw how naked was his heart
His brain whirled like a spindle ; and for days
It trembled on the verge of madness, like
A wounded bird that, fainting, flutters o'er
The brink of some huge precipice, and heeds
The hollow-sounding chasm, and the floods
Enraged, that fret and dash and foam below,
And, weak with loss of blood, just barely clings
Upon the sickly shrubbery, and saves
The little life that throbs within its breast !
His soul drank in the bitterness and gall
Of twenty years, congealed into one draught !
His heart was swollen with deepest agony,
And, like the maniac, preyed upon itself,
When, shivering with passion and despair,
He gnaws the flesh of his own arm, and drinks
His blood, warm gushing from his heated veins,
And at fantastic nothings in the air,

Which come and go at his capricious will,
He stares, and turns away, and stares again,
With vacant eye and foam-beslavered mouth !
O, then, with strangest sense of coming ill,
He felt the fountains of his life dry up,
As by a drouth, before the Dog Star comes,
Arising with the glaring August sun
To rain malaria on the groaning earth,
The waters in the meadows are dried up ;
When Nature, for a thousand weary miles,
Lifts all her pinched and shriveled blades to God,
And piteously in silence prays for rain !

The morning and the evening seemed to him
But interludes in fever's fitful dream,
Which came and went, but brought nor day nor
night ;
For then the fairy presence he had loved
Flitted about him like a cruel taunt,
And mocked him with a vision of the past
Until his soul was stirred to frenzy wild —
And then he thought all human love was false,
That human friendship was a breathing lie
Which led men captive ever, and betrayed !
And thought of all the promises of youth,

Until the evil spirit in his heart,
Long curbed and disciplined to obedience,
Grew huge in its proportions, and essayed
To talk to him of vengeance — while its tongues,
Innumerable as the forest leaves,
Like hissing serpents crept along his nerves !
Anon, he took his pen, which long had been
His instrument of pleasure and of toil,
And wrote the thoughts that crowded on his brain,
Demanding utterance ; and gave to her
The messages he never could recall —
The burning words of which himself knew not.
Anon, he melted down to sentiment
And wrote some feeling stanzas to his love ;
She took them, saying, I will read and burn ;
No eye shall see them — *but they do no good* ;
And then she came and handed them to me,
With just a little devil in her eye,
And said, See what that fool has writ me — there !
I took the paper from her hand and read : —

O, could I now but clasp the hand
Whose magic touch my hopes could bless,
I should not seek, through this fair land,
The pity of forgetfulness !

O, could I hear the silver tongue
That once, upon a summer's morn,
Spoke sweeter words than angels sung
When the redeeming Christ was born,

My soul would lift her weeds of woe,
And let the light of morning in ;
Then I might know, or seem to know,
The love I cannot hope to win !

But the hand that stroked my forehead
Ere I knew these days forlorn,
Is to me a hand abhorred,
For it points to me in scorn !

And the tongue that spoke so sweetly,
Earnestly the pledge of youth,
Is a perjured tongue completely —
But alas, I dealt in truth !

And that truth shall bloom in beauty,
Increasing as my hopes depart,
While I tread the path of duty
With an arrow in my heart !

He saw the infant devil in her eye,
The little imp of Treachery and Hate,
New born, and suckled at a virgin breast ;
And then the very room in which he stood,

Full of the purple twilight of the stars,
Seemed peopled with a throng that hated him !
He started from his painful reverie,
And knew the presence he had loved so much ;
And when his ever-dreaming eyes met hers,
Blacker than midnight on the pathless seas
When all the stars are shrouded, and the moon
Has gone to rest beneath the toiling waves,
He thought they were the only stars that gleamed
Through Love's Elysian atmosphere, and cast
His fatal horoscope of life from them !
And moved by the illusive thought, he did
The things he would not do for length of days
And half the habitations of the world,
And tried, by other measures than were wise,
To fan the smoking embers, and instill
New life into a love that long was dead.
The fairest flower that ever bloomed on earth,
Whose smell and touch are life's amenities —
The flower that blossoms o'er two mutual hearts,
That sends its roots down to their lowest depths
And draws its double nourishment from both,
Had withered ; and no mortal power could lift
Its drooping petal up, its life restore !
And when his halting reason had returned,

Like truant urchin, loitering slowly home,
And sat once more supreme upon its throne,
He saw it all,— and turned his steps away,
Chastened and sad, but with a great resolve
To stand henceforth in Truth's dim battle line,
And fight, for her, the conflict to the end !
He took his weeping brother by the hand,
And could have wept, had tears availed him then ;
He gazed upon his stern old sire, and saw
The mark of sorrow on his aged face,
And prayed a blessing on his silver hair ;
He kissed the wailing mother, that had borne
Him in her arms, and soothed his infant cry —
Then crossed the threshold that shall nevermore
Sound with his coming feet, and to the whirl
Of towns and cities bent his weary way,
Bearing his burden with him. Such is fate.

The waves of time went over him ; and still,
The Spirit of Unrest did follow on
And was his enemy on sea and shore !
The passing years, which were his friends, did
 write
Their farewell tokens on his heart and face ;
His sorrow they did soften and subdue

Down to the limits of a sober grief
Which had some reason in it; and he grew
More like himself, and oft beguiled the hours
In writing, as he used to write in rhyme,
His thoughts and feelings on a foreign shore.
These are the poems which he sent to me.

TO A PICTURE SET IN GOLD.

WHERE is the lovely face that crossed
My path, when I could well rejoice
In love's enchanting dream? A voice
Within the darkness whispers — *Lost!*

It may be she is lost to one
Whose love her artless beauty claimed,
Who loved her better than he named,
And loves as when that love begun.

I know not where her footsteps tread;
What home is gladdened by her smile;
What voice awakes her laugh the while;
Or whether she, perchance be dead.

I am a wanderer, young and hale ;
My heart is beating strong and brave,
While now, upon the Southern wave,
My sail is bent before the gale !

And always when beneath the sea
The fading sun reclines to rest,
I dream of her, that she is blest.
Does she as often think of me ?

I pray not, if it gives her pain ;
If it recalls the fault of him,
Who would not that a tear should dim
Those eyes of fire and soul again !

This picture, full of sleeping life,
I carry with me, as I roam
Away from my New England home,
And scenes of early care and strife.

And it is all I now can hold
Of Mary's sweet and tender grace,
A sunbeam, flashed upon her face,
And prisoned in its case of gold.

But it recalls the happy hour
When I, in other clime than this,
Imprinted on her lips the kiss
That was to me a passion flower !

When we together watched the sky,
While up the blue Joe English Hill
The moon was climbing, and the rill
A-laughing, at our feet went by.

She then was Nature's worshipper ;
She read her volume, opened wide
Along the star-lit mountain side,
While I in silence worshipped her !

And nothing could our pleasure mar,
As I began love's sweet emprise,
And she, with passion in her eyes,
Sang ditties to the Evening Star.

O, then I thought no power could part
Two souls that loved, with every breath,
Each other's presence unto death,
Or turn away a trusting heart !

But I have learned the world since then,
And something what it is, to trust
A frail embodiment of dust,
And of the thoughts and deeds of men.

And I would silence now the thought
Which once unto my soul was dear
As passion's first and only tear,
And count my boyish love as naught.

But yet each lovely face I see,
Each form divine, divinely sent,
A mockery and punishment —
Must bring new misery to me !

For each awakes my fancy wild,
And pictures to my maddening brain,
The hope that withering died in pain,
The soul I loved, *unreconciled* !

O, Heaven's supremest wrath is love,
All fair without, that turns to dust,
Or unrequited, or unjust —
Suffered in anger from above !

But other hands than mine shall press
Unto the lips the fruit of gold,
That turns to ashes, pale and cold,
The emblem of supreme distress !

For by the certain law of God,
There is no pain, however sore,
But other souls have felt before —
The wine-press not alone is trod.

And this is Nature's kindest plan,
That every sorrow there can be,
And every joy — one is for thee,
And one is for thy brother man.

All hail, O Nature ! God Supreme !
The only power that man can know,
The only light which e'er can throw
A glimmer on life's fleeting dream.

The God the Christian's love adores
Is Nature tenderly expressed,
In pledges of eternal rest
To mortals on Elysian shores !

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO.

EXISTENCE is a dreary wild
When all the hope of life is gone;
When Fortune's long forsaken child
Sits weeping in his grief alone;

When nought can dry his bitter tears,
And soothe his aching heart and head,
But memory of the vanished years,
And thoughts that should be cold and dead.

O, Time, upon whose viewless wing
The fleeting seasons come and go,
Instruct my truant Muse to sing
The better days of long ago.

The present may, perchance, beguile
My passions while its moments last;
But fortune's best and dearest smile
Is buried in the silent past.

And I would gladly now resign
All that the future has for me,
To spend an hour of sweet lang syne,
Dear Mary, with the past and thee.

But that, alas ! can never be
The fate of Fancy's hapless son ;
And unrelenting Destiny,
With cruel finger, beckons on.

I see the future, dark and dim,
Before my mortal vision rise ;
The years, like banished seraphim,
Are marching by me in disguise.

My days are dark and cheerless now,
Since time cannot reverse its flight ;
Oblivion's hand is on my brow,
And beckons down the pall of night.

Yet sometimes in these darker hours
I dream of better days in trust,
But when I reach to pluck the flowers
Of youth, they turn to senseless dust !

New England ! on thy glorious hills
I stand in thought, a moment free ;
I hear the music of thy rills —
Nature's low notes of liberty !

And where my long lost love reclines,
In welcome shade I kneel to woo ;
And Nature's lyre of mountain pines
Breathes soft as it was wont to do.

But ah ! the witching vision flies,
And facts are sterner things than dreams ;
Sweet Mary's dark and solemn eyes
No longer watch thy purling streams !

O, they have changed from what they were
When last they shot their fire at me ;
At least, such is my dream of her
Upon this dark and stormy sea —

That in a fairer clime above, —
The climax of the dreams of this —
They wear the same old look of love,
That once to me was more than bliss.

O, what is man? Frailty personified.
And what is God? Alas, we only know
Though God is reason, reason is not God.
Then who shall judge the human heart, and say
If its developments be just or not—
If this one be a fool, or that one wise,
When wisdom is of God and God alone?
O, who shall lay his fingers on its keys
That tremble with a thousand passions wild,
And say if they strike harmony or not,
But the kind Maker of the instrument?
Thus far I've followed in the devious path
Of one great passion; and, though uninspired,
Divinest Memory has led the way.
Thou antiquarian of the careless soul,
Delightful Memory! I bid thee hail!
Thou standest by me with thy sweet, sad face,
Morning and evening, and thy hands are full,
A-dripping consolation—giving back
The gems I had forgotten or mislaid,—
The dear forget-me-nots of other days.
Thou seemest like a fair and patient nun,
Counting thy rosary of dew-kissed buds;
And yet there is a cruel thorn concealed

In the most precious rose-bud of thy string,
Though it be ruddier than the lip of Eve,
When first it crimsoned with the coursing blood
And throbbing pulses of a glorious life!

AT SEA.

BLOW, west wind, blow upon the sail
That spans my bark, so strong and brave,
And soon my distant friends will hail
The waif upon the restless wave.

My native land grows dim, and fades
Along the line of waters dark ;
I bid farewell its sunny glades
From the deck of my out-bound bark.

The wilderness of waters now,
Blue with the sunset's latest ray,
Would seem a paradise, if thou
Couldst link thy fate with mine to-day.

But I must every joy forego,
And trust my fate to wave and wind ;
And yet, the deepest of my woe,
Is that I leave thy face behind.

But other friends will care for thee,
And lovers seek thy beauteous hand ;
And thou wilt seldom think of me
Forsaken in a foreign land !

But oft my weary heart will yearn
To taste the joys, the loves of old ;
The flame of ancient days must burn
Forever in its lamp of gold !

LINES ON THE SEA-SHORE.

THE future now is dark to me,
The past is darker still ;
I stand beside the sweeping sea,
And let its dirge-like melody
My mourning spirit fill.

My careless feet now press the track
Of waves as they depart ;
And the wailing sea-bird answers back,
From out the night so drear and black,
The wail within my heart !

And I think how like these changing waves
Is this poor mortal life ;
We stand amid the wreck of graves,
The sports of passion, and the slaves
Of every care and strife !

And we are fading thus away
And leave no trace behind ;

The present wave is our to-day
That passes on its silent way
Like dead leaves on the wind.

The wave that breaks upon the shore
Rolls back into the deep ;
But other waves, forevermore,
With endless swell and surge and roar,
Their quick succession keep.

So when these human waves shall break
Upon life's rocky strand,
Back to their source they go, and make
Room for the millions who shall take
Their places in the land !

NEW ENGLAND.

NEW England, dear New England, evermore
The home of Beauty and the land of Art,
Where'er I roam upon a foreign shore,
Thy cherished memory warms my bleeding heart.

Thou birthplace of that glorious Liberty
That broke the shackles from the bleeding slave !
I hail thy lofty mountains of the free —
God-set monuments of the fair and brave !

The little wisdom I have ever known,
In my existence of a trivial date,
I gathered at the foot of Learning's throne,
'Where thy great sages in their glory sate.

On thy green hills our country's lyre is strung
By the weird fingers of the master hand :
By thy blest firesides are her lyrics sung
That stir the pulse of freedom in the land !

'Twas here, from Heaven that History's Muse came
down,
To dwell awhile among the sons of men ;
And laid aside her old, indignant frown
To touch with flame blind Prescott's noble pen !

And here she reared the altar of her fame,
Lit with the fire Prometheus gave to her,
And Bancroft, kneeling in her sacred name,
Receives the laurel of a worshipper !

Fair Freedom chose thee for her blest abode,
When down from Heaven her white-robed angel
came ;
And the eternal Providence of God
Has multiplied the honors of thy name. —

And, in a dream, I see the future rise,
And Liberty's colossal genius stands
Upon thy mountains that divide the skies,
Proclaiming freedom unto all the lands !

The mightiest chain that bound the human slave,
Forged by the spawn of tyrants, and in Hell,
Has felt the strokes of thy strong arm and brave,
That smote the crest of Tyranny so well !

And now, throughout the wide domain of man,
The startled millions hail thy honored name ;
Oppression trembles at thy glorious plan,
And Liberty rejoices in thy fame !

Go on, my country : the applauding ages,
Down the remotest corridors of time,
And classic History's unwritten pages
Shall hail the memory of thy name sublime !

THE STAR OF HOPE.

THERE is a star whose light sublime
Illumes the darkening path of Time ;
No storms can blind its cheering ray,
And drive its genial light away.

It is the smiling star of love,
That shines a genie's face above —
It is the glorious star of peace,
That lights the soul when passions cease.

It is the guiding star when Death
Assumes this vague and fleeting breath.
Sweet Star of Hope, all hail ! all hail !
To thy calm port I bend my sail.

THE MUSIC OF THE HEART.

THERE is a chord within the human heart,
That, struck by love's white fingers in its prime,
Vibrates the tone that never can depart,
And echoes softly down the path of time; .

That beats responsive to the soothing lays
That cool the fever of the heated brow,
Recalls the pleasure of departed days,
Filling my senses with its rapture now.

Did ye not hear it when the wind was low,
And sighed so sad among the cypress trees?
That sweetest melody of long ago,
You hardly can distinguish from the breeze,

That floats so softly, like the dying song,
That, poured no longer from the lips of love,
Still breathes the summer's perfumed air along,
And seems an echo from the Heaven above?

Ah no, you heard it not. Why ope your eyes,
With pearly tears so sweetly overrun;
As blue and lovely as the summer skies
Beneath the lashes of the setting sun!

For only one can hear that sweet refrain,
While viewless fingers touch his lips and heart;
And only one can drown his human pain
In melodies beyond the reach of Art.

IMPROPTU ON A RAINBOW.

O THOU, whose bow of promise, set
Across the thunder-cloud at night,
Assures the world that Thou art yet
A God that speaks in love and light.

I ask no prophet's creed to teach
My duty to a God like Thee,
When thy sublimest thought can reach
Down to a creeping worm like me !

Thy voice was lately in the sky ;
Thy lightnings rent their drenched shrouds,
While Titans played, in passing by,
The lofty marches of the clouds !
And how that music thrilled my soul !
I saw the vivid flash and smiled,
Because I knew the vast control
That held the bolts of vengeance wild !

Thy face is Nature's robe of green,
Its love in leaf and flower I see ;

And while in solitude I dream,
My heart is thine — Thou hast my knee !
The bird upon the topmost bough
Of yonder elm, is singing praise,
And Nature pays her evening vow,
And all adore Thy wondrous ways !

Sweet Bow of hope and promise, hail !
Fair symbol of eternal bliss !
Thy glowing colors soon will fail,
But ere they go shall teach me this, —
Where'er my careless feet may roam,
To read God's loving thoughts, and know
That He will call the wanderer home
From all his sorrow — all his woe.

CROSSES.

THE saints in Heaven have borne their cross below,

And now rejoice on high;

The fiends in Hell another cross—and know
The unavailing sigh!

This world is full of crosses. Ere we perish

We bear them all in pain;

There is a cross in everything we cherish
For pleasure, or for gain.

Friendship and love are good enough in season,

But soon we mourn their loss,

And cannot tell, by any human reason,
Why each one has its cross.

The cross of Friendship is a bitter thing,

But all in turn must wear it;

The cross of Love—it has a sharper sting
To mortals doomed to bear it!

There is no promise from a smiling Lord
Of blest redemption in it;
The Cross of Christ alone bears its reward,
And all may hope to win it.

For humble Faith is holding it before us,
O'er all life's stormy sea;
And Christ Himself is ever calling o'er us, —
“Arise, and follow me!”

He cries through all the ages, unto man, —
“O, bear my cross, and live!”
He lays before him the divinest plan
That God to man can give!

And shall we bear that patient cross *to-morrow*, —
Its thorns, and then its flowers?
O, shall we wait for some dark day of sorrow,
When only *now* is ours?

To-day is ours to live in, and to plod —
To draw our borrowed breath;
To-morrow 's future, and belongs to God,
And may belong to Death!

Be wise in season, is a saying old:
O, let us *now* be wise,
And we shall deem far better than fine gold
The wealth of wisdom's prize!

O SAY, WILT THOU WEEP?

WHEN my harp shall have played its last number,

And mute in the woodlands shall lie,

And the hand that once strung it shall slumber

Where the mournful winds sweep by;

When the grave shall its dark, gloomy portal

Close over my tenantless clay,

O say, wilt thou weep for the mortal

Whose spirit is gone — dearest, say?

Wilt thou seek where thy lover is sleeping;

And plant the sweet violet near?

O say, wilt thou come in thy weeping,

And nourish its root with a tear?

For, though thousands might weep in their anguish,

And strew brightest flowers o'er my tomb,

One tear from thine eye of blue languish

Would be worth all their sweetest perfume.

THE LOST JEWEL.

THERE is a spirit on the breeze
That passes by my cottage door ;
It whispers in the leafless trees
The secrets of the dreamy shore ;
It speaks of pleasures I have known
In better days and brighter climes ;
Of love that is forever gone —
The jewel of the olden times.

O, if that spirit, robed in white,
And breathing language all its own,
Would take me by the hand to-night,
I should not feel so deeply lone !
But spirits, bloomed in brighter lands,
And borne on fleetest pinions by,
Despise the touch of human hands
And scorn a mortal's rising sigh !

My heart is sad and lonely now,
And never can dispel its pain ;

A viewless hand is on my brow,
And presses hard my aching brain !
But I would be myself once more,
And never at my lot repine,
If Mary of the days of yore
Could lift her melting glance to mine !

But that, alas ! can never be ;
I fling the witching thought away,
To think a dark eternity
Divides her heart from mine to-day !
And I would cross that river, cold
And dark along the shore of Death,
If but a hand I've known of old
Reached out to greet my fleeting breath !

Sometimes I think my cruel fate
Is too inhuman to be real ;
And that my life, my love and hate
Are only of the kind ideal ;
And then I weep, as oft before,
And feel the sweet relief of tears,
And sigh for one that is no more,
Sweet Mary of my bygone years.

A WISH.

I WISH I had the dove's fleet wing
To waft me to my native shore,
That I might hear my mother sing
The good old songs she sung of yore.
I'd stand where now my father stands,
And turns to Heaven his weary face,
And beckons with his aged hands,
A blessing on the dear loved place.

And sitting in the old arm-chair,
To youthful recollection dear,
I'd lay aside each burdening care
Through the long evenings of the year;
And Mary's dark and holy eyes,
And snowy hand should welcome me,
As when beneath the starlit skies
We drank the cup of ecstasy!

My wish is vain! it cannot be;
No dove will lend to me its wing;

The evil fate that follows me
Is but a cold, relentless thing !
And Mary is a stranger now
Where she was known so well of old ;
The wreath of virtue on her brow
She wears along the streets of gold !

And now upon a stormy sea,
The white waves break around my bark ;
A pallid finger beckons me
Out of the night so wild and dark !
And I shall never tread again
The holy spot that gave me birth,
But evermore must drink in pain
The cup that holds the dregs of earth !

THUNDER.

THE thunder-caps along the west
Are white, and tipped with burning gold ;
They ride the lazy winds abreast,
The captive winds that pine for rest,
Like Templars of the sky so bold.
The flowers on Nature's bosom fair
Are drooping in the stagnant air ;
They fail, they faint on hill and plain,
A-withering they pray for rain.
These flowers are like our lives that pass
Into the dread eternity,
Like sands within the transient glass,
Or waters rolling to the sea.

O weary hour ! it passes by ;
A change is on the western sky !
And now a shadow dark as from the walls
Of Pluto's rayless palace, black and cold,
Slowly across the pallid landscape falls,
And white lips plead for mercy in the halls

Where else had reigned the Pleasure-God of old!
It is the shadow of the form
That rides upon the rushing storm,
Whose voice is thunder, and whose breath
Is forked lightning, charged with death!
The mountains that our fathers trod,
To whom the granite shields were given,
That lift their massive fronts to Heaven,
Tremble and echo at his nod!
And when his fiery hand is laid
Upon the works that men have made,
Their hearts, which but an hour before,
Were brave as Hector's on the Trojan shore,
Are ground to powder; and dismayed,
They own the fiat of a God,
Amid the flash and roar
Of Heaven's great cannonade!

O mount, whose granite cliffs sublime,
Defy the hoary hands of Time,
That braved the storms in ages old,
The thunders of the years untold—
Be firm! the demon charge hurl back,
Howling in rage along its track!

Behold! He comes in pride and power,
Majestic ruler of the hour!
He trails his sable garments now
Along the western sky;
A wreath of lightning binds his brow,
Light flashes from his eye;
And from out his shadowy train
Fall the tears that we call rain.
O, many a sprite is laughing there;
And the multitudinous rain,
Flung from the sheen of their flashing hair,
Down through the smoky and sulphurous air,
Is drunk by the thirsty plain!

See the lightning's lurid glare,
Painting wrath upon the skies!
Darting colors through the air,
Brighter than the rainbow dyes.
Hear the monarch's fearful voice
The shadowy clouds among;
It is the music of my choice,
The tenor of my song.

And it will burst above the earth,
To joy and terror giving birth,

Till the mystic, fiery leaven,
Borrowing the tints of Heaven,
Streaming through the open portals
Of the home of the Immortals,
Forms above the dark horizon,
Bow of promise and of light;
Rising from the dread orison,
Like the morning after night!

Flash on, red Demon, flash !
Loud let thy thunders crash !
With all thy native ire ;
Thy pity little worth,
O, bind the trembling earth
Around with chains of fire !
Wake thy dissonant yell
As Lucifer's as loud,
And ride the steeds of Hell
From stormy cloud to cloud !

These are the notes I love to hear
Amid the falling rain ;
Let them fall sweetly on my ear,
Though others hear with pain.
Pour vengeance on the plain,

And stir the sluggish soul !
Let cowards hear the roll
Of thy car gigantic,
With terror frantic !
Then bend thy streaming sail
Of fire and hail,
Across the wild Atlantic !

MEDITATION.

O MEDITATION ! thou art some relief,
When thought's deep currents o'er the senses
roll,
To soothe the pangs of bitterness and grief
That burn unceasing in the prisoned soul !
I hear the bell upon the church tower toll
The hour of midnight ; and the ghastly moon,
Mother of solitude, like some dark ghoul
Called from its cave of darkness all too soon,
Recalls the memories I cannot control —
Visions of gold that broke on passion's reefy
shoal !

And I go back along the tide of years
And stand again beside a mother's knee ;
I hear a father's counsel and his fears,
And know a brother's hand to pilot me.
It is no dream, for dreams can never be
Wet with the consecration of hot tears ;
And there I rest, as some pure spirit free,

With home's sweet music ringing in my ears.

My loved and lost! once more I welcome thee,
And press thy willing lips in royal ecstasy.

And now I feel thy balmy breath, O Sleep!

Friend of the friendless on a foreign shore,
Like Heaven's sweet incense o'er my senses creep,
And bear me back into the days of yore,
Across the years which I have known before,
When time to me was new, and life was young!

And, dear New England, mid thy mountains
hoar

I hear the song my dark-eyed Mary sung,

And press a form I thought to press no more.
I wake—and hear no sound but the mad waters'
roar!

ALONE.

THE Queen of Silence sails along
The bannered concave of the sky,
And I would hail her face with song,
Were not my fount of feeling dry.

The jewels of her sweeping train,
Set in the casket of the night,
Are marching o'er the heavenly plain
To the sublimely grand refrain
Of harps of gold, in realms of light!

On them I gaze, as in a dream,
While in their spangled course they roll,
And to my fevered sense they seem
Relentless eyes of fire, that read,
Beholding every thought and deed,
The secrets of my burning soul!

And I could dash in anger down,
My poisoned cup of woe and pain;

But that I feel the lasting frown
Of Destiny, in heart and brain,
And that to plead with her is vain !

Once I could feel as others felt ;
For others' weal I had a care ;
There was a time when I have knelt,
In suppliance, at the hour of prayer.

But now my hope is crushed, indeed ;
The only soul I loved is gone ;
And in my hour of darkest need,
I stand forsaken and alone !

Darkness and Desolation ! where,
Where is the storied land of rest
That once upon my vision rose ?
In the far East ? It is not there ;
And in the cold and gloomy West,
There is no balm for human woes !

But still one thought has power to light
The lonely path through which I roam —
My mother prays for me to-night
Beside the altar of my home.

O, let that holy prayer ascend
Like incense, where the saints have trod;
It goeth from the truest friend
That man hath known, except his God.

TO OLD JOE ENGLISH.

AH, woe is me! At last it must be said:
Farewell, old Mountain, on whose lofty crest
My boyhood's feet were ever wont to tread,
When the slant sun was sinking down to rest
Behind the old, romantic hills that shut the
golden west.

My heart is breaking! tears from either eye,
Those little emblems of the great in soul,
Are falling like the rain! are falling — why?
That I must leave thee, mount, o'er whom doth
roll
The angry clouds — the thunder-crash of Lucifer's black scroll!

My sires have dwelt beneath thy brow long years;
Thou wert to them a friend both true and fast;
Thy paths have known their feet, thy shade their
tears,
Through the dim seasons of the silent past;
And still to me thou art a friend, and would be
to the last.

When, with a smile, the dappled Morning flung
Her sun-breathed glances from the purple east,
Entranced, I listened to the magic tongue
Of Nature's friendship, though the first, not least,
While Daphne spread for me her ever welcome
feast.

And when that low descending, summer sun
Shone glowingly aslant the mottled sky,
I watched the shadows climbing, one by one,
Among thy centuried oaks, as noiselessly
As though they grieved to see the daylight fade
and die.

Beside thee dwelt a maiden, darkly fair ;
Her soul was pure as summer's azure skies ;
I placed the wild flowers in her shining hair,
And kissed her lips — then O, my mad surprise !
That Death should touch that blooming face, and
pale those flashing eyes !

God of my fathers ! it is strange indeed !
The fairest flowers, the brightest gems of earth
Are torn away from hearts that break and bleed,

While those are left of none or little worth,
To mock the name of Beauty, and her heritage
by birth !

"Twas at thy foot the fair Sevilla fell —
Her warm blood stained the unpolluted snow —
And her fierce lover, whom the fiends of Hell
Might fitly be ashamed of, if to know
A viler dwelt on earth, could cause a blush below.

He sleeps to-day within a culprit's grave,
And no tongue mentions but to curse his name ;
And soon Oblivion's remorseless wave
Will blot the record of his evil fame ;
Vile homicide ! who dared to slay the fair and
brave.

But she will live forever, conquering death ;
And when the Spirit of eternal Good
Shall pour along the summer gale his breath,
Her chainless soul will wander in thy wood,
Free as the mountain air of thy sweet solitude !

Reclining here beneath this giant oak,
Where oft the dusky wooer met his love,

I hear the silence by her whispers broke,
Soft as the love notes of the mated dove,
Or faint and distant echo of some choir above.

And when within thy leafy recess lingers
The wood-lark's breathings, like the songs of
Aiden,
I've seen thy wild rose plucked by viewless fin-
gers,
And floated on the breezes, perfume laden ;
And then I knew the presence of the hapless mai-
den !

And legends old are floating through my brain,
A thousand idle and discordant fancies ;
I see Joe English, in his plumes again,
March down the war-trail of his old romances —
And now the painted savage round the war-fire
dances !

Through thy green groves resounds the clash of
arms,
And Death's relentless Angel gluts his ire ;
The Indian war-cry, with its dread alarms,

Speaks far and wide of tomahawk and fire ;
And now the bleeding captives around the stake
expire !

When Liberty, from out her dungeon barred,
Sent her faint cheer for Concord's battle won,
The thrice accursed Tories basely marred
Thy fair traditions ; and, towards the slanting sun,
Hurled down, in burning effigy, the patriot Wash-
ington !

O, let them have no pity, but the scorn
Of freemen's sons through everlasting time !
The meanest enemies of man yet born,
They wallowed in the God-insulting slime
Of treachery, blacker than the foulest crime !

The Arnolds of Perdition, justly damned, —
Their names shall blot thy history's pages !
Their souls shall be a stench in Hell, and jammed
In the black den where Pain relentless rages,
Shall writhe in agony of endless ages !

But all is changed save thy unchanging form ;
The conflict's diapason sounds no more,

And naught disturbs thy silence but the storm
That howls among thy branches, as of yore ;
And peace and plenty smile upon my native shore.

And since those days the fleeting years of time
Have borne into the past these visions gory ;
And standing here, upon the verge sublime
Of two eternities, I see thy story —
Thy mystic legends fading upon the page of glory.

Alas ! that Fate, with dark and stern decree,
Should bid that I in other lands must roam,
Far from the friends I ever loved, and thee,
O mountain, that beside my early home,
Pointest thy regal head up to the welkin dome !

But it is so : and why do I stand here,
And cavil at the things I cannot change,
And not resign myself unto my sphere,
And through this world of death and sorrow range,
Companion unto doubt and fear, and all that's
dark and strange ?

Away, thou phantom ! quick ! the spell is o'er ;
O come ! blest spirit that enchantment lends,

Into my bosom all thy nectar pour !

With other mountains I will make new friends,
Nor yet forget the one with thoughts of child-
hood blends !

I never can forget those happy hours

I whiled away beneath thy oaken shade ;
Hearing the wild birds in their vocal bowers ;

Reading with joy, and yet with little heed,
Nature's sublimest volume, spread out where all
may read.

And in the fleeting years, when far away,

My bark is tossed upon life's troubled stream,
My thoughts shall turn, O mountain old and gray,
Back unto thee, my boyhood's early theme,
Thou monumental pile, that meet'st the sun's
first beam.

THE FADED WREATH.

COME, fill the silver goblet high,
Stint not the red and sparkling wine ;
I drink to the light of a matchless eye
And the bloom of a face divine ;
Let pleasure rule our hall of love,
And music fill each silken aisle ;
I'm happy now as the mated dove,
And bask in the light of Beauty's smile !

A stranger pours the glowing tide ;
The bright drops sparkle o'er the brim ;
He turns his shaded face aside
To hide from me his features grim ;
I quaff the wine to a maiden fair,
And dash the empty goblet down ;
The stranger stands like a statue there,
Wrapped in the folds of his sable gown.

The visor lifts from his pallid brow ;
The gown like gossamer falls away ;

I see the stranger's visage now,
A shape of cold and lifeless clay!
And "Wake, O wake from love's young dream!"
The stranger cried beneath his breath,
He stood our plighted loves between,
And Mary grasped the hand of Death.

O Mary, in the days of old,
Beneath thy dear ancestral tree,
I twined thy silken locks of gold,
And wove a wreath of love for thee.
I little thought its flower of love
Would fold its petals up and die;
But it shall blush and bloom above,
Through thy long years, Eternity.

THE MINSTREL'S HARP.

THE minstrel cried, — “ O bring my harp,
And let its notes be sad ;
I cannot play as once I played
When my young heart was glad.
For sorrow in my bosom sits
And must assert its sway ;
And I, in broken numbers now,
Must weep my grief away.

“ Ah, once my heart could others move,
And friends around me smiled ;
But O, its chords are broken now,
And friends are all beguiled !
And she, whose sweetly human soul
I loved, when love was power,
Has faded, as the wild rose fades —
A sweet, but nameless flower !

“ But still those darkly radiant eyes
As calmly look at me,

As when, among the Granite Hills,
We roamed so blithe and free;
They sparkle through the shades of night,
Soft as the light of evening's star
That sentinels the outer wall
Of Paradise afar!

“Then how can I be blithe or gay,
Or play as once I played,
When those sad eyes look down on me
Through night's deep, solemn shade?
Or touch the harp of sweetest tone
That breathes of holy things,
When tears of grief are falling fast
Upon its silent strings?”

REBECCA, THE JEWESS.

CLOSED are the tear-gates of Paradise now,
And the shadows of death lie cold on the brow
 Of Rebecca, the Jewess so fair ;
And her dark eyes that sparkled than diamonds
 more bright,
Have paled the soft rays of their pure, living
 light,
And vacant they gaze as a lone star of night,
 When darkness is filling the air,—
 The balmy, the soft summer air !

Weep, daughters of Sion ! weep, chosen of God !
For the morrow shall moulder, beneath the cold
 clod,
 The form of the spirit that's fled !
Wreathe the dark hair of the maiden laid low,
Spread violets over her bosom of snow,
And lay her down peacefully, calmly, below
 The green winding-sheet of the dead,—
 The flower-decked robe of the dead.

There let her sleep, till the last trump shall sound
The call of the dead, that slumber around
Earth's green hills, and by its streams ;
Waked by the voice of the Angel of Doom,
Then may she burst the dark gates of the tomb,
Arrayed in white robes, and radiant with bloom
To sing in the Land of Dreams,—
The beautiful Land of Dreams.

SONNETS.

I.

AH me ! how sweetly sounds the Sabbath bell ;
Its clear tones on the morning breezes swell ;
They speak of pleasures I have known of yore :
Of love's first beautiful and bygone dream ;
Of lips divine that I shall press no more ;
Of friends that perished on the shore, where roll
The waves of Lethe's dark and silent stream ;
Of speaking eyes that looked into my soul,
And closed their lids forever ! burning tears
That left their trace beside the mark of years !
No wonder then, these Sabbath bells are sweet,
Although their tones are very sad to me,
Recalling dead years from the past, to meet
The present, and a solemn warning be.

II.

O LOVELY Woman, Empress of the heart !
The queen of all the wide domain of man ;

How fair, how false, how frail a thing thou art,—
The bitter and the sweet of Nature's plan ;
Half of the ill on earth by thee is planned,
And yet thou art an angel to command
In all except the pinions to arise !
In death's dark chamber, where the fevered brain
Is tortured by wild torments and fierce pain,
Thou seemest like a god in fair disguise ;
Thy soothing pity and thy gentle hand
Come like a wand of mercy from the skies !
Thy realm is boundless as the earth and sky ;
Thy rod's a kiss, thy seal of power a sigh !

III.

WHILE in this world we hear of fields Elysian,
And lands of rest beyond the deep blue sky ;
If rest for man is not a fleeting vision,
Then rest will be for all who live and die ;
Then why here should we ceaseless learn to sigh,
And groan o'er evils that are not our own ?
We cannot grasp the great eternity,
Or move Eternal justice on the throne.
Why howl in frenzy, why lament in tears ?
Why add to present ills thy borrowed fears ?

O weak and vain — O oft deluded men !
O ye who wield the potent tongue and pen,
When will ye learn, by common sense or art,
The deepest hell is in the human heart !

IV.

ALL hail, O Freemen ! Slavery is dead
That erst with woe our pitying eyes did greet;
The God of battles smote the hydra's head,
And laid it bleeding at fair Freedom's feet !
Its dying groan was heard around the world ;
Its rotten carcass to oblivion hurled ;
Its name a hissing in the march of time.
The meanest vulture would not stain its beak —
Although it fed on filth from day to day —
In flesh that stinks so much of lust and crime
As this dead monster, that so long
Hath fought for Hell and human wrong !
The carrion crows, called from their mountains
bleak,
Cawed in disgust, and turned their flight away !

V.

AND O, rejoice that Liberty can rest ;
Ring out the peal from every village bell !

The chains that bound her to her glowing breast,
Slippery with blood, go rattling down to Hell,
Where bitterly, in gloom, they clank the knell
Of fiends that angrily did die in pain ;
Whose feet shall never tread God's earth again !
And let the heart that loves its country, swell
Triumphantly to God in gratitude
That He hath smote in wrath the spurious brood !
But pity those who still refuse to give
Their welcome to the voice that rises high ;
In treason steeped, they are not fit to live ;
Festerling with shame, they are not fit to die.

VI.

O, EVERY flower that grew along my path,
And cheered my spirit with its influence sweet,
Has withered at the fell Destroyer's wrath,
And lies in ashes at my pinioned feet !
Dear Mary, fairest bud that ever blushed
Its opening sweetness to the fading years,
I can remember when thy young face flushed
With love's unpainted colors, and the tears
Of fond affection from thine eyelids rushed
In quick succession, and thy silver tongue
To me of Heaven and love undying sung ;

And now I curse, in bitterness and gloom,
The fiend that gathers flow'rets for the tomb,
And blights the young hope in its first fair bloom.

VII.

THE day is dying ; darkness flings
Its shadows round this heart of mine ;
O, quickly strike the tuneful strings
And wake their joyous notes divine ;
And if, within my inmost soul,
Beneath the thoughts of meaner things,
One thought of former joys remain,
Or feeling not akin to pain,
Their melting murmurs shall control
The current of my life again ;
And I will wake from sorrow's spell,
And join the joyous throng once more,
Aroused by thee, who strik'st so well
The harp I loved in days of yore.

VIII.

O is there then a balm for tears ?
A fair and dreamy land of rest,
Beyond this vague, uncertain breath,
Where, free from Passion's dark behest,

A soul can bless the hand of Death
Through all the fair and fleeting years?
And drink that fountain, clear and bright,
Pure as the source from which it springs,
Where seraphs bathe their forms of light,
And angels lave their shining wings?
Then I would bid a long adieu
To golden hopes that fade and die,
And hail the clime where all is true,
And mortals nevermore may sigh!

IX.

WHAT is this Death, the dread of all mankind,
That rules o'er all nor knows an hour of rest?
Voluble spirit of the balmy wind,
Marking its own the truest and the best?
An end to all, a voice of other years,
A leap in darkness, never-ending sleep?
Or is life real? and haply do we live
For some kind purpose of Almighty Power?
And God this little point of time doth give
To test the soul formed in the primal hour.
And, can it be? Is life beyond these tears,
Which we shall enter when we cease to weep?

And shall the spirit, from its bonds of clay,
Rise like the lark, and to its rest away ?

X.

GOD dwelleth not in piles of lifeless stone,
Nor is approached with ceremonious prayer ;
But in the dreary wilderness, alone,
Lift but the pleading eye, and God is there !
His step is on the mountains, and the air
Is full of the Eternal Principle ;
The beautiful in Nature, everywhere,
Speaks better things than any priest can tell.
Then why should I with the vast throng rejoice,
Who weep in concert upon stated days,
And in their Gothic temples lift my voice
With every clay-born child of earth who prays,
Storming the citadel of Christ, the Lord,
With sounds of woe, — with notes of vain accord ?

STAR OF THE WEST.

ALL hail to thee, beautiful star!
How sweet is thy face divine ;
I would thy pure light from afar,
Within my cold heart could shine ;

For sorrow, and sin, and despair,
Have filled up the measure of years ;
But mostly 'tis sin that is there,
Or poison of passionate tears.

I've drank from the fleshly chalice
The wine the fair bacchanal poured ;
I've stood, in my own self-malice
Full drunk at the festive board ;

I've doubted the friends that were truest,
And turned them away in my grief ;
I've sported the love that was newest,
If it brought but a moment's relief.

And now I am sad and regretful,
And sigh with the moan of the sea ;
And ah ! I would be forgetful,
But the dead are looking through thee !

It has been my lot to inherit
A heart that was reckless and free ;
And thou art the first good spirit
That ever looked smiling on me !

Then hail to thy radiant face,
O beautiful Star of the West !
I know thou art kept in thy place
By the hand that will lead me to rest.

THE FLOWER OF THE GRANITE STATE.

SAY, blue-eyed flower of the Granite State,
Pride of my mountain clime afar,
Don't you remember who wandered late
In the day's decline, when moon and star
Flooded the maple groves with light,
Fringing the robes of the dreamy night?

Don't you remember who sat by your side,
By the laughing brook where the wild rose grew,
And kissed, in the prime of his youthful pride,
The lips that were sweeter than honey dew,
And told his love with a whispering sigh,
While the hours, like minutes, hurried by?

Say, don't you remember that urchin so bright,
And the diamond wheels of his beamy car,
As he rode down the path of the silver light
Swift as the fall of the meteor star,—

And that you knew his invisible steed
Was a captive fay, in its utmost need ?

O, the flower of the Granite State is gone,
And the weeping willow is bending low
O'er a grave on the hill-side, bleak and lone,
Where the turf is green, and the pansies grow ;
And the fingers that twined her golden hair,
Now twine the sea-weed locks of care.

CHLOE.

Down in the church-yard sleeping
Where the pansies bloom,
And the willows, weeping,
Bend down upon her tomb,
Lies Chloe, sainted maiden
As ever loved or sung
The song that, in Love's Aiden,
Now trembles on her tongue.

Her eye was soft and tender
As evening's gem of light,
That throws its golden splendor
Across the skies of night ;
Her cheeks were like the roses
Of Italia's sunny plain,
Within whose sweets reposes
A balm for every pain.

But when our loves were plighted,
And bound beyond control,

Death opened or benighted
The flood-gates of her soul !
They laid her where the soft winds play,
With wild flowers on her breast,
And the oriole sings its life away
Above her place of rest.

O, LIGHTLY TOUCH.

O, LIGHTLY touch the mournful string,
And wake thy music as of yore,
For I am weary, sorrowing
For pleasures I shall know no more ;
For that sweet time when I, a boy,
Roamed in the wildwood, free from care,
As full of wild and thoughtless joy
As any bird that sported there.

My boat was on the waters then ;
It danced along the silver stream ;
Ah me, that I could row again
The Mary of my boyhood's dream !
We watched the stars along the sky,
The moon above the mountains fair ;
We heard the night owl's plaintive cry
Upon the gently startled air.

My boat is gone ; but the river
Is still flowing on to the sea ;

My day-dreams have vanished forever,
And life is now weary to me;
But in my bosom yet lingers
The love of life's earliest spring;
It burns at the touch of thy fingers
As they sweep o'er the breathing string.

Then lightly touch the mournful string
That breathes of holy days of yore,
And to my slumberous senses bring
The joys I thought to feel no more;
And I will be a boy again,
And row my bounding boat from shore,
The while thy sorrow-soothing strain
Breathes of the joys I've known before.

ANNIHILATION.

O, is there in this wide and lovely world,
One heart that holds the slightest love for me ?
Some secret spot where, passion's banner furled,
I might kneel down and worship, trustingly,
The Holy Spirit whose unslumbering eye
Hath ever watched my pathway wild and free ?
Though I would taste life's pleasures ere they fly,
In all the pride of love and liberty !

Sweet Mary of my better days agone,
Has thy pure heart that loved me once grown cold ?
Still must I tread my weary way alone,
And sigh forever for thy love of old ?
My life is vain ! I feel the icy finger
Of Fate laid heavily upon my heart ;
And now the loves that soothed my spirit linger,
Now plume the wing, and, one by one, depart !

And from Death's dark and gloomy portals far,
I see the black wings of the night descend ;

A mist obscures life's faintly glimmering star,
And Hope has fled, who was my only friend!
Cheerless and dark as a forgotten dream,
My universe is one eternal blank;
My only refuge is in Lethe's stream,
And I am nearing now its dismal bank!

Hark! hark! I hear its sweeping surges roar!
Ten thousand spirits ride upon the wave;
Each struggles hard to reach the fading shore;
The tide is strong — there is no power to save!
Past, present, future, all, all are dead
Beyond the point where Hope's great promise fell;
There is no Heaven, — their dream of Heaven is fled;
Their fears of Hell are calmed, — there is no
Hell.

FAREWELL.

I STOOD by thy gate when the sun went down ;
Thy hand was clasped in mine ;
My journey lay to the distant town,
To busy streets, and halls of renown,
Where thousands strive for Fortune's crown ;
And with lips pressed to thine,
I sighed, Farewell ;
And the wild winds whispered — farewell.

O, little I thought I should never greet
Thy face in the wide world again ;
That I never should press with my weary feet
The time-worn hall, where we used to meet,
And chase the hours with steps so fleet,
And gayly smile at pain —
As I sighed, Farewell,
And the wild winds whispered — farewell.

I fling the rising tear away !
We shall meet in a better time ;

And thy spirit, risen from its clay,
Shall sing the song of love alway
To the golden harp of the endless day,
 And the radiant clime ;
And no more — Farewell —
Shall the wild winds whisper — farewell.

FREDERICKSBURG.

WAVE your black banner, tyrants, wave !
And traitors sound a strain of hell
O'er this dark spot, where life to save,
Brave Freedom fought, and fighting, fell !

Joy in thy deeds of blood and shame !
Exalt thy heroes to the sky ;
Traitors — shall be thy only name,
Thy cause shall be a festering lie !

Boast that fair Liberty is dead,
While Northmen, weeping, stand around ;
And that ye saw her gory head,
And bosom bleeding on the ground.

Let Slavery exult awhile,
And lift its reeking chains on high ;
We pour upon the burning pile
The blood of men who dare to die !

It will prevail! the signs are good ;
The eagles of our Northern crags
Come down to cheer the multitude,
And perch above their battle-flags !

Dead! by that God whom we adore,
Thy guns but pealed thine own death-knell !
And she shall rise, with strength of yore,
And hurl thee, traitors, back to Hell !

New forms arise to lead us on,
From out the depths of Mystery ;
The spirits of the dead and gone
Come back to battle for the free !

We light our altar fires anew,
And hail the common brotherhood ;
But ere the *false* shall rule the true
We'll quench those holy fires in blood !

LIBERTY'S CALL.

FREEMEN, to battle!
Your country is calling,
Where cannons rattle,
And brave men are falling;
The flag of our glory
Is taunted, defied!
Its bright folds are gory!
Its heroes have died!

The black hand of Treason
Is raised to strike down
Our charter of reason —
America's crown!
And Liberty beckons
The true and the brave;
Triumphant, she reckons
The doom of the slave!

Come from our granite hills
At the call of the free!

Come, as our rushing rills
 Roll on to the sea !
Bear on our starry flag ;
 Cheer loud as you go !
Down with the traitor's rag !
 Death ! death to the foe !

What ! will ye stand idle,
 Nor heed the loud call !
Be infamy's bridle
 Hung over you all !
What ! will ye be human ?
 Then succor the slave !
The love of dear woman
 Is all with the brave !

LINKS,

SUGGESTED AT THE FUNERAL OF A SOLDIER KILLED AT
GETTYSBURG.

TOLL, toll the bells on the hills of New Boston,
And weep for an hour in the old church to-day ;
A soldier returns from the field he was lost on,
And asks for this tribute we only can pay.
Lay his dust low where his fathers are sleeping,
And there let him rest through the dark rolling
years ;
His brothers shall come in their sorrow and weep-
ing,
And hallow the spot with their prayers and their
tears.

And O, when the spring-time shall come with the
swallow,
And the bleak earth shall smile in her green
robes again,
His sisters shall plant by the spot that we hallow
The first flowers that bud by the valley and
plain ;

For nobly he went when his country was calling
Her freemen to perish, her honor to save ;
So bravely he stood where his comrades were fall-
ing,

'Tis meet that the wild-flowers should bloom o'er
his grave.

O, many and brave were the souls that before him,
For kindred and country the same path have
trod ;

Fair Liberty stretches her gory hand o'er him,
And breathes an inaudible prayer to her God ;
And thus his cold brow with the laurel adorning,
She writes his fair name on the page of her
glory ;

And the wild birds that sing mid the green trees
at morning,
Shall ever repeat the loved names of her story.

THE BALLAD OF BLACKWELL'S HALL.

UNDER the maple-trees, a maid
Sat in the summer evening long,
Singing to the forest shade
Soft snatches of an olden song.

She pulled the pansy from its stem
And kissed its blue and tender leaf,
Well knowing it was Nature's gem,
To soothe the pangs of lovers' grief.

And when the gentle Ellen sung,
The song-bird came and envied her ;
So sweet the music of her tongue
That Love within the branches hung,
And was a silent worshipper !

And Ellen sits awaiting now
Within her rural bower of love ;
A wreath of wild flowers binds her brow ;
Her eyes are peering down the grove,

Mild as the white swan's when she dies
Abreast the silver dimpled lake,
Soft as the sun-kissed cloud that lies
Low in the morning's roseate wake !

The young Loves, on the tinted air,
Sailed in fairy ships and fair ;
Their hulls of pansy leaves were made,
Upon the ribs of fire-flies laid :

Their ropes were of the thistle down ;
Their tiny spars were moss stems brown ;
Their sails, the wings of the golden fly ;
The wind that wafted them, a sigh ;

Their ensigns, hailed by lovers' eyes,
Were captive moonbeams from the skies,
Bound by those cunning elves in play
To light them on their laughing way ;

Their anchors were the smallest seeds
Of smallest flowers that ever grew,
And many a spider's bosom bleeds
To spin the thread that holds them true ;

They anchored in the haven sweet
Of blue-bells blooming at her feet ;
And silence from the upper air,
Breathed its calm presence everywhere,

Broke only by the breeze that strayed
Around the love-delighted maid,
And shook, with sweetly tender care,
The love-knots of her tangled hair.

Now Henry was a gallant youth,
Noble, and free, and brave ;
The language of his eye was truth,
His arm was strong to save.

And always, when the summer sun
Low in the painted west did ride,
And day, with all its cares, was done,
Was Henry by his Ellen's side.

O, he is her own true lover,
Faithful to the trysted hour ;
And fair Venus smiles above her
From Adonis' starry bower ;
And the angels drop a blessing,

And the soft winds go caressing
Bird, and maid, and flower.

The spell of love, it bound them well,
But soon its silver chords must break ;
O, not forever lasts the spell
That seals the lips that long to speak.

It starts the tear-drop from the eye,
And ere you are aware,
Its power is gone as silently,
And leaves the tear-drop there.

And so as minutes sped away
Upon their wings of air,
The spell that kept the words at bay
Was gone, they knew not where.

In his face was then imprinted
Passion's feeling, deep and strong,
Like the wavy outlines dinted
By the burning flood of song.

And thus unto the noble maid
Spoke Henry in his pride

(In confidence, yet half afraid
She would not be his bride),

In lovers' language, artless, free,
Of beauty and of power,
Born of the emergency
Of Love's portentous hour.

“O, let thy blue and heavenly eyes,
Hid by their lashes wet with tears,
But greet the thoughts in mine that rise,
With all the love of passing years !

“The minstrel bird that sung so late,
Within the grove has sought its mate;
The flower encloses now the bee,
The moon dips in the silver sea —
A sweetly blushing bride is she !”

O, sweeter is her face the while,
Than Flora's mid the flowers at morn !
O, sweeter than her laughing smile
When Morning of the East is born !

The passion of her trusting eyes,
And the soul that in them lies,

Gleam through the tears of love's sweet pain,
As Hope's bright arch of elfin gold,
Across the stormy skies unrolled,
Gleams through the summer rain.

Now Summer passes on its way,
And Autumn follows close behind ;
The woods are turned from green to gray,
Their leaves are scattered to the wind.

November winds are cold and bleak,
The mountains now are brown and drear ;
November scenes of sadness speak, —
The saddest of the fading year.

The swallow's matin song is o'er
Beneath the old barn eaves ;
The reaper goeth forth no more
To cut the ripened sheaves.

And now the shadowy wings of Night
In death-like silence fall ;
Darkness without, but all is light
In Blackwell's oaken hall ;

And there the cup of mirth runs o'er,
While lovely maidens laugh and sing;
They dance upon the sanded floor
In many a giddy reel and ring;

And soldiers who had fought with Stark
When Freedom's cheering fight was won ;
Who battled through her fortunes dark
At the right hand of Washington ;

The men who never knew dismay
Mid toil, and danger, and despair,
Now dance at Henry's nuptial day,
And drink the cheer of Blackwell's heir.

O, sweetly swells the music now,
And gay the dance goes on ;
And pledging deep the formal vow,
The father hails his son,—

“ Welcome, welcome here to-night,
To thee and all thy band !
I give thee up my title, right,
And lovely daughter's hand !

“And here I pledge thee, brave and free,
With this bright cup of wine;
May fortune ever follow thee,
And her brightest smiles be thine!”

And Ellen in their midst was gay,
The bright attraction of them all;
Anon, she seemed a fawn at play,
Anon her spirits droop and fall:

And now the rose upon her cheek
Outshines the rose upon her hair;
And now its hue is pale and weak,
As with the sickly touch of care.

Her hair, in silken ringlets brown,
To her full bosom falling down,
In color matched her bridal gown.
The mantle o'er her shoulders flung
Was white as unpolluted snow,
Or, as the breast that heaved below
Its folds in careless beauty hung.

And Henry takes her willing hands,
A true and ardent worshipper, —

He leads her where in silence stands
The gray and solemn minister.

Long, long the good man prayed and talked ;
He bound them by God's holy word ;
He told them how their fathers walked,
In humble faith, with Christ the Lord ;

That in the journey just begun,
If they would reach its highest end,
That God the Father, Christ the Son,
Must claim in each a trusting friend.

O, sweetly swells the music now,
And gay the dance goes on ;
And, pledging deep the formal vow,
The father hails his son.

And swiftly fly the hours of night
Upon their wings unseen ;
They take their sadly silent flight
Like changes of a dream.

And swift along the night's black shore
The ruthless angel came ;

And in his bony hand he bore
The impress of his name!

It was a flaming brand, as keen
As Alexander's was, I ween,
That cut the Gordian knot of old ;
And on it, brighter far than gold,
Was written,—“ *Azrael, strong and bold :*
My sword with mortal blood is rife !

Greater than Alexander's prime,
Or all the human kings of time,
I cut the Gordian knot of life !”

And quick he stood beside the maid,
Trembling in every limb, afraid,
And whispered, in his fiendish pride
“ *I'll take a bride ! I'll take a bride !”*

Unseen by that bright company,
His visage only met her eye ;
She only saw his flaming brand ;
She only heard his stern command.

And lo ! she feels his poisoned breath !
She reels — she sinks — she falls !

One moment on her lover calls —
The next is cold in death !

And Henry's face is deadly white ;
His eye-balls from their sockets start,
They gleam with wild, unearthly light ;
His shrieks appall the stoutest heart !

He trembles like the falling leaf
When autumn winds blow sad ;
Ah me ! it is not passing grief ;
His mind is crushed — *he's mad !*

He speaks a broken language now ;
A pallid hand is on his brow ;
A viewless finger beckons him
Among the ranks of seraphim

And falling on the death-cold maid,
He sobbing drew his parting breath !
The wedding-guests shrunk back, dismayed,
To see the naked hand of Death !

THE OLD RED HOUSE ON THE HILL.

I AM dreaming to-night of my boyhood's prime,
Of days that now seem like the sound of a rhyme

When the voice of the singer is still ;
And somebody's spirit is leading me back,
Along a rough and a weary track,

To the old red house on the hill.

How well I remember that dearly loved spot ;
No place could be dear where my Mary was not,

No other my fancy could fill ;
For oft when my feet were too weary to roam,
I turned, like a pilgrim hastening home,

To the old red house on the hill.

And when the red moon was a-climbing the sky,
And night spread her star-sprinkled banner on
high,

We listened, with only a lover's sweet sigh,
The song of the lone whip-poor-will ;

And while we forgot all our sorrow and care,
The poplar trees lifted their branches in prayer,
Silently pleading a benison there
By the old red house on the hill.

O, the poplar-trees stand by the old house yet—
Their murmuring leaves, by the gentle dews wet,
Are feeling the summer's warm thrill—
But the maiden is gone from the open door,
And my weary feet shall be rested no more
In the old red house on the hill.

Ah me! can it be? Is it only a dream?
Shall I never again in the sunset's gleam,
When the odors of evening distil
Like ambrosial balm on the soft summer air,
Press the hand and the lips that once waited me
there
In the old red house on the hill?

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